

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A suction valve for a small hermetic compressor of the type presenting a compression cylinder, which has an end closed by a valve plate, said valve comprising:

a flexible vane comprising:

a fixation end portion to be affixed to the valve plate;

a bending median portion provided with a median opening aligned with a discharge orifice; and

a sealing end portion operatively associated with the suction orifice provided in the valve plate,

wherein a [[the]] distance between an external edge of the flexible vane and its adjacent internal edge portion of the median opening diminishes[[,]] more intensely in a first portion of a higher bending region of the flexible vane close to the fixation end portion by way of a first curvature of at least one of the external edge and its adjacent internal edge and progressively in a second portion of the ~~along a~~ higher bending region of the flexible vane of the valve by way of a second curvature of at least one of the external edge and its adjacent internal edge, from a maximum value, close to the end fixation portion, to a minimum value, close to the boundary of the higher bending region of the flexible vane,

wherein the flexible vane is configured to distribute opening forces along the higher bending region allowing the flexible vane to be bent along the higher bending region in an open position, and

wherein said flexible vane, presenting in its bending median portion and in its sealing end portion, a “U” shape with the legs being symmetrical about a longitudinal axis of the flexible vane, are of equal length and are united by the fixation end portion.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously presented) A suction valve, according to claim 3, wherein the median opening of the flexible vane presents a substantially oval contour, with its axis coinciding with the axis of the valve.

5. (Previously presented) A suction valve, according to claim 1, wherein the distance between the external edge and the internal edge diminishes more rapidly close to the fixation end portion than along the rest of the higher bending region.

6. (Previously presented) A suction valve, according to claim 1, wherein the higher bending region extends from the region of the fixation end portion until about 50% the length of the flexible vane.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) A suction valve, according to claim 1 wherein the flexible vane is cut from a support blade, in order to have its external edge spaced from an adjacent cutting edge defined in said support blade by a gap wherein the gap is larger in its region adjacent to the fixation end portion of the flexible vane.

9. (Previously presented) A suction valve, according to claim 1, wherein the flexible vane is configured to distributed the opening forces along the higher bending region such that the opening forces are not concentrated in a region of the bending median portion that is adjacent to the fixation end portion.